

**REMARKS**

This is a full and timely response to the Office Action mailed November 1, 2010.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 8. Thus, in view of the amendment to claim 1, claims 8 and 9 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to their underlying subject matter. Further, new claims 17-20 have been added to reintroduce the canceled subject matter of original claims 13-16. Thus, claims 1, 3-7, 10-12, and 17-20 are currently pending in this application. Support for the claim amendments and new claims can be readily found variously throughout the specification and the original claims. No new matter has been added.

In view of these amendments, Applicant believes that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103**

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Akisada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,426 B1) in view of Ishii (JP 7-59197) (*Please note that the Examiner used the first name of the inventor, Tetsuya, to cite this reference in the Office Action.*). Further, claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Akisada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,426 B1) in view of Ishii (JP 7-59197), and further in view of Ohba et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0032899 A1). Still further, claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Akisada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,426 B1) in view of Ishii (JP 7-59197), and further in view of Ikushima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,553,134) (*Please note that the Examiner used the second inventor, Hayakawa, to cite this reference in the Office Action.*). Lastly, claims 1, 3, and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Akisada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,426 B1) in view of Schleuniger et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0171970 A1). These rejections have been rendered moot by the incorporation of allowable claim 8 into claim 1.

Applicant notes that the Examiner has indicated in the Office Action (see page 5 of the Office Action) that claims 4, 8, and 9 are allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of

the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Since the subject matter of allowable claim 8 has been incorporated into independent claim 1, claim 1 is now allowable based on the reasons set forth by the Examiner (i.e. *"rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims"*).

With regard to the remaining rejected claims, i.e. claims 3-7 and 10-12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, in view of such dependencies, it is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are allowable at least for the reasons that claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Thus, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

#### **New Claims**

New claims 17-20 are directed to the canceled subject matter of original claims 13-16. Applicant submits that new claims 17-20 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, in view of such dependencies, it is respectfully submitted that new claims 17-20 are allowable at least for the reasons that claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

**CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are believed to be clearly patentable over the outstanding rejections. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the claims in light of the above remarks is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

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Respectfully submitted,

By:  \_\_\_\_\_

Lee Cheng  
Registration No.: 40,949  
CHENG LAW GROUP, PLLC  
1100 17th Street, N.W.  
Suite 503  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 530-1280  
Attorney for Applicant

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